

Minister for Defence Procurement Anne-Marie Trevelyan's speech at DSEI

It is a pleasure and a great privilege to open DSEI 2019.

The organisers have laid on an extra special show in this their 20th anniversary year.

You'll get to see some incredible displays, from a ship-boarding up close, to watching a state-of-the-art Tornado Boat cresting the waves.

You'll get to try out an incredible array of amazing kit, and I am looking forward to trying out the virtual reality simulator which gives a sense of what it's like to deliver care while flying in the back of a Chinook. I think I might be feeling slightly sick just thinking about it.

And we will get to listen to some thought provoking speeches from a diverse cast of international experts.

There is one thing I hope each and every one of you will take back home at the end of this week, and that's confidence.

Confidence: firstly, in the strength of great British industry.

Outside this exhibition centre, we've moored examples of our world class maritime capability, our Type 23s, our minehunters, our training vessels.

Confidence in the other domains too as we showcase our mastery in them all; ground based air defences with Land Ceptor; and our new Tempest concept which is developing at pace thanks to the UK Government and industry genuinely working together.

But British defence is about much more than big platforms: our innovative SMEs, the life blood of British defence, are experts in every part of the production process. From sail to stern, from complex weapons to wingtips.

In my own rural constituency of Berwick-upon-Tweed, I recently discovered that Hardy fishing – who make the best fishing rods in the world by royal appointment, also use their expertise in weaving to manufacture slender fibres of incredible toughness for the wings of our regal Typhoon.

Wander over to the Innovation Hub and you will discover pockets of brilliance from every corner of our four nations.

From the use of AI to enhance voice and speech analytics, to advanced nano-ceramic coatings on Kevlar vests, which are doubling protection from knife attacks.

Confidence in great British capability today is spilling into confidence tomorrow.

We are in the midst of a remarkable period of regeneration in Defence, and we are seeing the emergence of a fearsome future force.

Last month I was in Govan to cut steel on the second of our eight City Class warships, HMS Cardiff.

All eight of these Global Combat, Type 26, frigates will be built on the Clyde, sustaining 1,700 jobs in Scotland and 4,000 jobs across the wider UK maritime supply chain for decades to come.

But there is much more in the maritime supply pipeline, with our new Dreadnought submarine class, Type 31 and Fleet Solid support ships.

Today I can announce that we've awarded the £ 177m Boats In-Service Support contracts to five UK companies, so that we can repair and maintain all our small boats used by the Royal Navy, Royal Marines, British Army, and the MOD Police through to 2026.

We're investing in unmanned as well as manned capability, and this afternoon, on HMS Argyll, we'll be unveiling the next generation Maritime Autonomy Surface Testbed.

For the very first time we will have underwater drones able to scout ahead of a ship and detect threats beyond the visual line of sight.

All the while, we're building the world's most modern and cutting-edge carriers.

Less than a fortnight ago our HMS Queen Elizabeth headed off to New York on her Westlant trials, and HMS Prince of Wales is preparing to leave her construction berth to set sail to her home base in Portsmouth.

Flying from the decks of these mighty ships will be our state-of-the-art F-35 stealth fighters.

These are 15 per cent built by the UK's industry and highly skilled workforce, and we have begun the development of a sixth-generation fighter, Tempest, building on the world-leading skills and technological expertise of UK industry.

From the skies to the stars, we're determined to have the most secure satellite communication systems around. Today I can announce we have awarded a £70m contract to QinetiQ in Malvern to develop enhanced cutting-edge GPS receivers that will incorporate anti-spoof and anti-jam features to stop our signals being disrupted.

Taken together our Defence programmes support more than 260,000 jobs directly and indirectly across the United Kingdom.

In fact, we invest almost £20bn with our Defence industry each and every year, or some £300 per citizen.

Their hard work and our investment is helping to make our world a safer

place.

Not only are we confident in British industry, but we must also have confidence in the values of Defence.

Not only can you have confidence in British capability, but you can have confidence in the values that underpin every one of our capabilities.

Outside the Excel Centre today, there are campaigners whose wish for a safe and peaceful world leads them to misunderstand how Defence works. It is only by showing strength and credible deterrence that those who would wish our citizens harm are persuaded not to attack our way of life.

I want them to understand that by investing in equipment and kit which gives our armed forces the ability to defend our citizens against our enemies, Government can provide the vital insurance policy and the preparedness against unthinkable dangers.

The equipment we purchase allows our armed forces to do global good 24/7, whether working to protect trade routes in the Straits of Hormuz, or combating extremism in Africa, or defying Russian aggression in Eastern Europe.

When our deterrent effects succeed, Defence is invisible, since the threat is kept at range and allows us all to carry on our daily lives unimpinged by danger or disruption.

But effective Defence only works because of the money we're prepared to put in and the amazing people we train.

Without the right ships, tanks and planes for our highly trained personnel to use, we would all suffer the risk of attack.

Thirdly, I want you to have confidence to be our partners.

It's the strength of our industry, coupled with the enduring strength of our British values, that gives our allies the confidence to do business with us.

We are already the second largest exporter of Defence equipment in the world, selling equipment and security assets worth £20 billion last year. Doing deals with the UK is wrapped up with our commitment to through life maintenance, to joint training and joint exercise. It's the whole package.

The proof of our popularity is here in this hall, with its 42 international pavilions, 1,700 exhibiting companies and more than 3,000 international Government delegates from every part of the globe.

Unsurprisingly, collaboration is one of the key themes of this show.

But we don't just talk a good game, we act by standing alongside allies and customers through the life of military assets.

Today I can announce another partnership benefiting our Defence capability.

We are investing £31million in a new contract to provide the Joint Fire Synthetic Trainer at multiple UK sites.

This is an incredible Israeli idea, built in Oldham, which will sustain 30 jobs, and allow students from the Army, Royal Navy, and RAF to train simultaneously together in realistic and complex battlefields.

We are buying great kit but our approach to procurement is changing.

We are increasingly determined to do as much selling as buying.

Our world class manufacturing base is well established, and it's time we did more to open it up for business.

All this progress and new relationships, show that confidence breeds opportunity.

But making the most of that opportunity means making much more of our human capital.

Fantastic kit might bring us here to DSEI, but fantastic people from the mechanical engineers working in the bowels of that Type 23 outside, to the pilots of Protector drones at RAF Waddington, or the infantry patrols protecting NATO in Afghanistan, are the unsung stars of production, keeping this show on the road.

So one of the great challenges we face today, in the midst of increasing competition from other sectors, is how to continue recruiting, developing and retaining the very best of British workforce in this industry.

What is absolutely clear to me, is that the key lies in connectivity, bringing down old bureaucratic barriers to make it easier for different parts of the Armed Forces family to work together.

To that end I'm delighted to announce we're opening "Team Hersa" a new Joint Delivery Office for Directed Energy Weapons. This will unite the futuristic creative ideas of DSTL and the procurement muscle of DE&S.

We are investing £130million to create novel laser and Radio Frequency (RF) Weapons which, powered by electricity and operating without ammunition, gives the warfighter unprecedented flexibility on the frontline.

This new joint venture is just the start.

I want industry and Government to be joining forces to further our understanding of the companies in our supply chains.

The more we know about those smaller firms who have critical importance to the major projects, the more resilient we will be.

Fittingly, since we're here in the Land Zone, the British Army are already on the case with an innovative new initiative. Their Industrial Engagement Framework is designed to give industry greater clarity about the Army's

priorities, encouraging further innovation and raising awareness about the burgeoning opportunities to come.

Meanwhile, I want us, together, to do more to strengthen our STEM skills base, nurturing the excellent model such as the National Skills Academy for Nuclear in Barrow which is building the skilled technicians for the next 50 years, and to make sure that every corner of our four nations will have a role in the Defence enterprise and skills creation.

I want us to make Defence less exclusive.

For too long it's seemed like the top jobs in the Defence industry were an all-male preserve. So today, I am signing the Women in Defence Charter on behalf of our MOD Defence family. This charter is a collaboration between the Ministry of Defence, Women in Defence UK, ADS, the Defence Growth Partnership, industry and others. I want it to help shatter some glass ceilings, and encourage more women to reach the very top of every part of the Defence world that we are all a part of. If I can do it so can they.

Above all, we must, between us, inspire many more to join the Defence enterprise. Young people with skills which we need, and creative thinking which we don't even realise we need yet.

Where else can you build the sort of hypersonic fighters only seen in science fiction films?

Where else can you work in a place that makes saving lives its daily business?

Where else can you not just make a living for your family but give back to your country?

And, as Global Britain spreads its wings and looks to the far horizon and the opportunity to work alongside allies around the globe for peace and security, there's really no better time to work in defence.

So please do make the most of this fantastic exhibition.

Take time to tour the stands and, as you leave it don't just be laden with a DSEI goody bag, but also with bags full of confidence that Global Britain is bursting with the creativity and capability to seize the opportunities of tomorrow and ready to be your partner of choice.